

United States Mint Director Launches New Nickel at Three Flags Festival in St. Louis

March 14, 2004

Attendees Exchanged Cash For New Nickels Featuring Peace Medal Design on Back

ST. LOUIS, MO — United States Mint Director Henrietta Holsman Fore joined a host of dignitaries at the Louisiana Purchase Three Flags Festival today, where the United States Mint publicly launched the Nation's first new nickel in 66 years.

"It is my pleasure to introduce the first coin in the United States Mint's Westward Journal Nickel Series™, depicting the Peace Medal that Lewis and Clark carried on their historic journey and gave to American Indian leaders as tokens of goodwill and friendship," said Director Fore in an address to the festival. "Those attending the festival have the opportunity to be among the first to receive a little piece of history by exchanging their bills and coins for shiny, new, mint-condition nickels."

Attendees exchanged their bills and coins for new, 2004 nickels. The United States Mint gave out free new nickels to children.

U.S. Senator Christopher Bond (R-MO), Missouri First Lady Lori Houser Holden, Spanish Ambassador Francisco Viqueira, French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Judge Craig Manson, U.S. National Park Service Director Fran Mainella and National Congress of American Indians President Tex G. Hall were among those who participated in the festivities.

The new design on the reverse (tails side) of the nickel features a rendition of the original Peace Medal commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson in 1801. The design features two hands clasped in friendship; it also bears the inscriptions "Louisiana Purchase" and "1803". The obverse (heads side) retains the current likeness of Thomas Jefferson that appears on the 2003 nickel. Federal Reserve Banks began distributing the first nickels of the Westward Journey Nickel Series to the Nation's financial institutions on March 1, 2004, and the new coins should begin appearing in circulation during the next several weeks.

The United States Mint expects to release the second newly designed nickel in the Westward Journey Nickel Series in August 2004. It will feature the keelboat that transported Lewis and Clark. The United States Mint will produce sufficient numbers of the Westward Journey Nickel Series circulating coins to meet the needs of the United States. Two more newly designed nickels are expected to be released in 2005.

The Louisiana Purchase Three Flags Festival, which was March 9–14, is one of 15 National Signature Events commemorating the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Developed by the National Louisiana Purchase Bicentennial Committee, which is a coalition of major St. Louis area public and private organizations, local and Federal public officials and private citizens, the festival was the only Signature Event devoted to the Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the size of the United States.

Created by Congress in 1792, the United States Mint is the manufacturer of legal tender coinage for the United States. In FY 2003, the United States Mint manufactured approximately 11.4 billion coins and generated gross revenue of \$1.4 billion.

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